

# OFFICIAL PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL

## 2024 Employee Census Action Plan

The 2024 APS Employee Census occurred between during 6 May and 7 June 2024, with results made available in late July 2024. At the Senior Management Team's request, the People Committee analysed the results of the Census, and proposed action areas for consideration. The response rate from our people is high, with 80% of employees participating.

The results of the Census for OPC are very positive<sup>1</sup>.

- 97% of our results are similar to or higher than the APS overall result.
- We rank 5th on the well-being policies and support index
- We rank 5th on the employee engagement index.
- We rank 6th on the communication index.
- We rank 13th on the Immediate Supervisor index.
- We rank 26th on the Enabling Innovation index.
- All of these rankings are above the APS overall result for each index.

The People Committee analysis of the Census data developed themes for both celebration and maintenance, as well for monitoring and further action. Not surprisingly, these themes align with the focus areas for the OPC Strategic Plan in 2024/25, which is also developed with input from our people.

There were are many areas to celebrate, however only three are highlighted. In each of these areas, as well as all of the other areas not highlighted, OPC will continue to embed and enhance our current strategies to continuously improve our workplace.

There are only three areas where further action is needed. Each of these areas represents a challenge for OPC, and is similarly a challenge across the APS. We will continue to work, and to involve our people, to find and implement solutions to these challenges.

Implementation of agreed activities to address the Action and Monitoring areas identified in this Action Plan are incorporated in the OPC Strategic Plan implementation plan.

The quotes in italics in the Action Plan outlined below are from the comments OPC people made in the free text fields of the Census.

---

<sup>1</sup> See OPC Employee Census Highlights Report

# OFFICIAL

## CELEBRATION AND MAINTENANCE AREAS

### Employee commitment

OPC people are incredibly dedicated. We feel a strong personal attachment to the agency and to each other, and recommend OPC as a good place to work. One of our highest results (97% positive) is that OPC people are happy to 'go the extra mile' at work when required. This result is consistently higher than the APS as a whole, and one we celebrate.

*"One thing OPC is doing really well is ensuring a genuinely supportive and respectful culture. I think this is the reason that staff can put so much care and attention into their work."*

### Work environment and culture

OPC has a great culture, and we have put significant effort in recent years to ensure that everyone is supported to bring their whole selves to work. We have worked hard to ensure our people have great working conditions, respect each other, and value working with integrity.

*"One thing OPC is doing really well is supporting its staff and promoting an engaged and active workplace. We have a fantastic culture."*

### Flexible work

OPC has embraced the changes that were introduced through the common conditions into our Enterprise Agreement. Our people recognise that we support flexibility as much as is possible given the nature of our work, and give requests reasonable consideration. Again, this result is consistently higher than the APS as a whole, and one we celebrate.

*"One thing OPC is doing really well is providing flexible work arrangements to meet the needs of employees."*

## FURTHER ACTION AND MONITORING AREAS

### Technology, tools and processes

Our information technology remains one of our pain points. We are in the process of an information technology uplift, phase one of which will soon be implemented. However, these benefits have not yet been realised.

*“Noting that there is already a large-scale project addressing this, the biggest issue I've noticed working here is the need to bring technology and software in line with other APS agencies and utilising modern options available.”*

OPC is committed to modernising our technology to ensure we can meet and sustain industry best practice. We will continue to work to modernise our information technology platforms without losing the efficiency advantages that our bespoke systems have given us.

### Change

Change is a constant, and where it brings improvements to our workplace, very welcome. We have improved our ability to support our people to identify and adapt to more modern and sustainable ways of working. However, we are not yet as nimble as we need to be, and our change processes take too long.

*“If I could change one thing about OPC, it would be more urgent action on impending issues .... We need to improve our ability to accept change as a continuous priority”.*

We will refine our consultation and engagement practices so that we can work more quickly to achieve the outcomes we need.

### Workloads

We work hard. Our work is essential to Australia’s democracy and society. Our workloads, while similar to most other APS agencies, are a point of pain.

*“Resourcing remains an ongoing challenge. The agency is aware of this challenge, and have begun recruiting a number of new staff and promoting existing staff... Moving forward, it will require ongoing monitoring to ensure that all senior staff can maintain their workload, without adverse consequences to their wellbeing.”*

While we have mechanisms in place to ensure our workloads are safe, outlined in the [Fatigue guidelines](#), we will continue to address this issue. We will consider what else can we do to manage our workloads to prevent exhaustion and ensure psychological safety.